Minutes - May 3, 2023

Call to Order: Chair Bostwick called the hybrid meeting of the Ad Hoc Broadband Committee to order at 3:03 P.M. in the Dr. Daniel Hale Williams Rock County Resource Center Board Room.

Committee Members Present: Supervisors Beaver, Wilson, Winter, Mawhinney, Sweeney, Bostwick, and Sutterlin (3:08 P.M.).

Committee Members Absent: None.

Staff Members Present: Randy Terronez, Assistant to the Administrator; James Otterstein, Economic Development Manager.

Others Present: Celeste Flynn, Charter; Russell Berg, Nokomis Networking; Mitch Olson, Bug Tussel.

Approve Agenda: Supervisor Wilson moved approval of the agenda, second by Supervisor Mawhinney.

Moved item 6.A. after item 4.A.

ADOPTED.

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements: None.

Approval of Minutes:

February 22, 2023 Minutes: Supervisor Wilson moved approval of the February 22, 2023 minutes, second by Supervisor Winter. ADOPTED.

Review, Discussion and Possible Action:

Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Planning Grant Application Approval: Randy Terronez provided an update on the BEAD Planning Grant. He walked through the application.

BEAD Planning Grant Project: Randy explained that Rock County must be able to document higher unserved/underserved areas. The County would put out an RFQ to find a vendor to perform the scope of work for the project. Randy walked through the timeline outlined in the attachment.

Supervisor Wilson moved to authorize an RFQ and proceed with process, second by Supervisor

Winter. ADOPTED.

Public Service Commission (PSC) - County Broadband Survey: Randy walked through the intent of the PSC county broadband survey. He asked that the committee provide feedback on questions starting on page 16. The committee worked together to fill in the questions.

Fond Du LAC Bond Guarantee Fee Schedule: Randy explained that the County is receiving funding through the bond fee schedule. The County continues to receive funds.

Supervisor Winter moved to create a resolution allocating money to be used for future broadband projects, second by Supervisor Mawhinney. ADOPTED.

Director/Staff Reports:

Update on Charter Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) and Non-RDOF Progress in Rock County: Celeste Flynn provided an update on RDOF progress. Rock County projects are expected to be completed by October 2023. She also provided an update on non-RDOF progress.

Bug Tussel Wireless - Rock County Project Status: Mitch Olson summarized the updates that Bug Tussel provided. These will be available regularly. He shared an updated map of projects. Russ asked Mitch to provide a list of County-owned addresses that the line of fiber will be passing by. The committee requested that this report be added to the County website.

Bug Tussel Wireless Update on PSC Grant: Randy Terronez updated the committee that a $2 million PSC grant was awarded on middle-mile fiber. Mitch Olson updated the committee that they had to withdraw their grant application and forego the grant award. The bonded and ARPA funds are still available. There are still $11.7 million available for projects. The original amount was just over $13 million. Randy will be coming back to the committee with alternatives.

Status of Bug Tussel Wireless (BTW) ARPA Repayment Agreement: Randy provided an update to the committee. The attorneys are discussing aspects of the agreement.

Bonding Drawdown Status: Randy pointed to the packet page in the packet detailing funds that have been used so far.

Nokomis Networking - Russ Berg:

Current Market Assessment: No update.

County Needs/Wants: Mitch will provide an update on County locations that will be passed.

Technology Options: No updates.

Funding Options: BEAD will be next option for funding.

Partnerships: Parntering with Bug Tussel, Charter, or other providers with BEAD grants.

Intergovernmental Activities: No update.

Communications & County Webpage: Website updates will continue.

Discussion of Next Steps: The dates for the RFQ indicate when the committee will need to reconvene. The next meeting will occur on Tuesday, June 6, at 2pm, in N1/N2.

Next meeting date and time: Tuesday, June 6, at 2pm, in N1/N2

Adjournment: Supervisor Mawhinney moved to adjourn at 4:36 P.M., second by Supervisor Sutterlin. ADOPTED.

Respectfully submitted,

Haley Thompson
Office Coordinator

NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY COMMITTEE.